



How immigrant workers in U.S. have helped boost job growth and stave off a recession



Workers tend to cows in the milking parlor at the Flood Brothers Farm, Monday, April 1, 2024, in Clinton, Maine.

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How immigrant workers in U.S. have helped boost job growth and stave off a recession

By **PAUL WISEMAN,**
GISELA SALOMON and
CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — Having fled economic and political chaos in Venezuela, Luisana Silva now loads carpets for a South Carolina rug company. She earns enough to pay rent, buy groceries, gas up her car — and send money home to her parents.

Reaching the United States was a harrowing ordeal. Silva, 25, her husband and their then-7-year-old daughter braved the jungles of Panama's Darien Gap, traveled the length of Mexico, crossed the Rio Grande and then turned themselves in to the U.S. Border Patrol in Brownsville, Texas. Seeking asylum, they received a work permit last year and found jobs in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

"My plan is to help my family that much need the money and to grow economically here," Silva said.

Her story amounts to far more than one family's arduous quest for a better life. The millions of jobs that Silva and other new immigrant arrivals have been filling in the United States appear to solve a riddle that has confounded economists for at least a year:

How has the economy managed to prosper, adding hundreds of thousands of jobs, month after month, at a time when the Federal Reserve has aggressively raised interest rates to fight inflation — normally a recipe for a recession?

Increasingly, the answer appears to be immigrants. The influx of foreign-born adults vastly raised the supply of available workers after a U.S. labor shortage had left many companies unable to fill jobs.

More workers filling more jobs and spending more money has helped drive economic growth and create still-more job openings. The availability of immigrant workers eased the pressure on companies to sharply raise wages and to then pass on their higher la-



Workers tend to cows in the milking parlor at the Flood Brothers Farm, Monday, April 1, 2024, in Clinton, Maine.

Associated Press

bor costs via higher prices that feed inflation. Though U.S. inflation remains elevated, it has plummeted from its levels of two years ago.

"There's been something of a mystery — how are we continuing to get such extraordinary strong job growth with inflation still continuing to come down?" said Heidi Shierholz, president of the Economic Policy Institute. "The immigration numbers being higher than what we had thought — that really does pretty much solve that puzzle."

While helping fuel economic growth, immigrants also lie at the heart of an incendiary election-year debate over the control of the nation's Southern border. In his bid to return to the White House, Donald Trump has vowed to finish building a border wall and to launch the "largest domestic deportation operation in American history." Whether he or President Joe Biden wins the election could determine whether the influx of immigrants, and their key

role in propelling the economy, will endure.

The immigration boom was a surprise. In 2019, the Congressional Budget Office had estimated that net immigration — arrivals minus departures — would equal about 1 million in 2023. The actual number, the CBO said in a January update, was 3.3 million.

Thousands of employers desperately needed the new arrivals. The number of native-born Americans in their prime working years — ages 25 to 54 — was dropping because so many of them had aged out of that category and were nearing or entering retirement. Their numbers have shrunk by 770,000 since February 2020, just before COVID-19 slammed the economy. Filling the gap has been a wave of immigrants. Over the past four years, the number of prime-age workers who either have a job or are looking for one has surged by 2.8 million. And nearly all those newcomers — 2.7 million, or 96% of them — were born outside the United States.

At the Flood Brothers farm in Maine's "dairy capital" of Clinton, foreign-born workers make up half the staff of nearly 50, feeding the cows, tending crops and helping collect the milk.

"We cannot do it without them," said Jenni Tilton-Flood, a partner in the operation.

For every unemployed person in Maine, after all, there are two job openings, on average.

A study by Wendy Edelberg and Tara Watson of the Brookings Institution found that new immigrants raised the economy's supply of workers and allowed the United States to generate jobs without overheating and accelerating inflation. In the past, economists typically estimated that America's employers could add no more than 60,000 to 100,000 jobs a month without overheating the economy and igniting inflation. But when Edelberg and Watson included the immigration surge in their calculations, they found that monthly job growth could be roughly twice as

high this year — 160,000 to 200,000 — without exerting upward pressure on inflation.

Trump has repeatedly attacked Biden's immigration policy over the surge in migrants at the Southern border. Only about 27% of the 3.3 million foreigners who entered the United States last year did so through as "lawful permanent residents" or on temporary visas, according to Edelberg and Watson's analysis.

The rest — 2.4 million — either came illegally, overstayed their visas, are awaiting immigration court proceedings or are on a parole program that lets them stay temporarily in the country.

"So there you have it," Douglas Holtz-Eakin, president of the conservative American Action Forum, said. "The way to solve an inflation crisis is to endure an immigration crisis."

Many economists suggest that immigrants benefit the U.S. economy. They take low-paying but essential jobs that most U.S.-born Americans won't, like caring for the sick and the elderly. And they can make the country more innovative because they are more likely to start businesses and obtain patents.

Critics counter that a surge in immigration can force down pay, particularly for low-income workers. Last month, in the most recent economic report of the president, Biden's advisers acknowledged that "immigration may place downward pressure on the wages of some low-paid workers" but added that most studies show that the impact on the wages of the U.S.-born is "small."

Holtz-Eakin argued that an immigration cutoff of the kind Trump has vowed to impose, if elected, would result in "much, much slower labor force growth and a return to the sharp trade-off" between containing inflation and maintaining economic growth that the United States has so far managed to avoid. □

House passes reauthorization of key U.S. surveillance program after days of upheaval over changes

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House voted Friday to reauthorize and reform a key U.S. government surveillance tool following a dramatic showdown on the floor over whether the FBI should be restricted from using the program to search for Americans' data.

The bill was approved on a bipartisan basis, 273-147, though it will still have to clear the Senate to become law. The surveillance program is set to expire on April 19 unless Congress acts.

Passage of the bill represented a much-needed victory for Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., who has been wrangling with conservative critics of the legislation for months.

A group of 19 Republicans revolted to block the bill from coming to the floor earlier in the week, forcing Johnson to make late changes to secure their support.

The legislation approved Friday would extend the surveillance program for two years, rather than the full five-year authorization first proposed. Johnson



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., speaks during a news conference on Capitol Hill Wednesday, April 10, 2024, in Washington.

Associated Press

son hoped that the shorter timeline would sway GOP critics by pushing any future debate on the issue to the presidency of Donald Trump if he were to win back the White House in November.

Still, the legislation teetered precariously Friday morning as lawmakers voted on an amendment vociferously opposed by Johnson, the White House and sponsors

of the legislation that would have prohibited the warrantless surveillance of Americans.

One of his top critics, Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene said that Johnson's vote against the warrant requirement was another strike against him. "Basically, what's the difference in Speaker (Nancy) Pelosi and Speaker Johnson and there's not one,"

the Georgia lawmaker said.

The amendment ultimately failed by the narrowest of margins, in a 212-212 tie. Supporters breathed a sigh of relief as the vote was gavelled to a close.

The vote on the amendment cut across party lines, uniting progressives and conservatives who agree on little else, but have long been skeptical of the

government's surveillance powers.

And opponents of the legislation weren't giving up. In a surprise move after the vote was closed on the overall bill, a Republican made a procedural motion preventing the legislation from being sent to the Senate.

An additional vote will be needed next week.

The legislation approved Friday would permit the U.S. government to collect, without a warrant, the communications of non-Americans located outside the country to gather foreign intelligence. The reauthorization is currently tied to a series of reforms aimed at satisfying critics who complained of civil liberties violations against Americans.

But far-right opponents have complained that those changes did not go far enough. The vocal detractors are some of Johnson's harshest critics, members of the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus, who have railed against the speaker the last several months for reaching across the aisle to carry out the basic functions of the government. □

Jill Biden calls Trump a 'bully' who is 'dangerous' to LGBTQ people

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Jill Biden rallied LGBTQ voters for President Joe Biden's reelection campaign on Friday, calling likely rival Donald Trump a "bully" who is "dangerous" to their community and urging its members to "fight like hell" to keep the Republican from defeating her husband in November.

She said outside forces are working to undo the community's "hard-won gains" by stripping away rights and freedoms and states are passing laws "targeting this community." She encouraged members to spend every day until the Nov. 5 election working

to gin up support for the Democratic ticket of Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Voters in this demographic overwhelmingly supported Biden in 2020. The president, who is struggling with a low public approval rating as well as softening support among other key groups that backed him in 2020, needs the LGBTQ community's support.

"Donald Trump is a bully. He is dangerous to the LGBTQ community, to our families, to our country, and we cannot let him win," the first lady said at the event held by the Human Rights Campaign, a prominent civil rights organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

"We have to fight like hell. Today, tomorrow and all the days after. Until the polls close on Nov. 5. Until Joe and Kamala have won another term. Until all the people in all the places can live freely surrounded by love," she said.

Trump's campaign did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The Human Rights Campaign event followed the launch this week of "Out for Biden-Harris," which the president's reelection campaign created to mobilize LGBTQ voters.

In her speech, Jill Biden said the president has advocated for LGBTQ people by signing the Respect for Marriage Act, ending a ban on



First lady Jill Biden speaks before previewing the food and decorations at the White House in Washington, Tuesday, April 9, 2024, for the State Dinner for Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida on Wednesday.

Associated Press

blood donations from gay and bisexual men, allowing transgender individuals to

serve openly in the military and opposing conversion therapy. □

Prosecutors: South Carolina prison supervisor took \$219,000 in bribes; got 173 cellphones to inmates

By JEFFREY COLLINS

Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A supervisor who managed security at a South Carolina prison accepted more than \$219,000 in bribes over three years and got 173 contraband cellphones for inmates, according to federal prosecutors.

Christine Mary Livingston, 46, was indicted earlier this month on 15 charges including bribery, conspiracy, wire fraud and money laundering.

Livingston worked for the South Carolina Department of Corrections for 16 years. She was promoted to captain at Broad River Correctional Institution in 2016, which put her in charge of security at the medium-security Columbia prison, investigators said.

Livingston worked with an inmate, 33-year-old Jerell Reaves, to accept bribes for cellphones and other contraband accessories. They would take \$1,000 to \$7,000 over the smart phone Cash App money transfer program



South Carolina Corrections Director Bryan Stirling and Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott talk after a news conference outside Broad River Correctional Institution in Columbia, S.C., Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2018.

Associated Press

for a phone, according to the federal indictment unsealed Thursday.

Reaves was known as Hell Rell and Livingston was known as Hell Rell's Queen, federal prosecutors said.

Both face up to 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and an order to pay back the money they earned illegally if convicted.

Reaves is serving a 15-year sentence for voluntary manslaughter in the shooting of a man at a Marion County convenience store in 2015. Lawyers for Livingston and Reaves did not respond to emails Friday.

Contraband cellphones in South Carolina prisons have been a long-running problem. Corrections Director Bryan Stirling said inmates have run drug rings, fraud schemes and have even ordered killings from behind bars.

A 2018 riot that killed seven inmates at Lee Correctional Institution was fueled by cellphones.

"This woman broke the public trust in South Carolina, making our prisons less

safe for inmates, staff and the community. We will absolutely not tolerate officers and employees bringing contraband into our prisons, and I'm glad she is being held accountable," Stirling said in a statement. The South Carolina prison system has implored federal officials to let them jam cellphone signals in prisons but haven't gotten permission.

Recently, they have had success with a device that identifies all cellphones on prison grounds, allowing employees to request mobile phone carriers block the unauthorized numbers, although Stirling's agency hasn't been given enough money to expand it beyond a one-prison pilot program.

In January, Stirling posted a video from a frustrated inmate calling a tech support hotline when his phone no longer worked asking the worker "what can I do to get it turned back on?" and being told he needed to call a Corrections Department hotline. □

1 dead and 14 injured after semitrailer intentionally crashed into Texas public safety office

By LEKAN OYEKANMI and ACACIA CORONADO

Associated Press

BRENNHAM, Texas (AP) — A Texas semitrailer driver rammed a stolen 18-wheeler into a public safety building where his renewal for a commercial driver's license had been rejected, killing one person and injuring 13 others, authorities said Friday.

The driver identified as Cleonard Parker, 42, was pulled out of the truck by authorities after smashing into a Texas Department of Public Safety office in the rural town of Brenham, outside of Houston, Sgt. Justin Ruiz said.

Authorities say Parker was taken into custody but did not say which charges he would face.

"This deliberate, heinous act is a reminder of the dangerous work done by our law enforcement and licensing agencies that work to provide public safety and services," Republican state Sen. Lois Kolkhorst said in the statement.

Of those injured, two peo-

ple were flown to CHI St. Joseph's Hospital in Bryan, one was flown to Memorial Hermann in Houston and three people were transported to Baylor Scott and White in Brenham but have since been released. Eight people were treated on the scene. Kolkhorst said



Emergency personnel arrive on the scene after a an 18-wheeler crashed into the Texas Department of Public Safety Office in Brenham, Texas on Friday, April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

in the statement that no DPS staff suffered serious injuries and one staffer was trapped "for a period of time" in the building.

Texas DPS officials said in a social media post on X that the crash happened at the agency's office in Brenham, Texas, located about 75 miles (120 kilometers) west of Houston and requested people avoid the area to clear the way for responding medical personnel.

The Texas Rangers are investigating the incident and there is no further threat, DPS officials said Friday.

Images from the scene showed a large, red tractor-trailer hauling material on a flatbed in the parking lot of the building. The front

end of the 18-wheeler was damaged and covered with debris from the front doors of the office. Debris was also scattered out front near a gaping hole in the entrance.

The Texas Department of Public Safety is a sprawling agency and one of the largest state law enforcement operations in the country. It includes troopers who are a central part of a massive border security operation on the U.S.-Mexico border as well as the Texas Rangers, the state's top criminal investigators. But the department also has offices across the state that issue driver's licenses.

City of Brenham officials did not immediately respond to calls seeking further information. □

Israeli settlers rampage through a West Bank village, killing 1 Palestinian and wounding 25

By JACK JEFFREY and JULIA FRANKEL

Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Dozens of angry Israeli settlers stormed into a Palestinian village in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on Friday, shooting and setting houses and cars on fire. The rampage killed a Palestinian man and wounded 25 others, Palestinian health officials said.

The violence was the latest in an escalation in the West Bank that has accompanied the war in the Gaza Strip. An Israeli rights group said the settlers were searching for a missing 14-year-old boy from their settlement. After the rampage, Israeli troops said they were still searching for the teen.

The killing came after an Israeli raid overnight killed two Palestinians, including a Hamas militant, in confrontation with Israeli forces. Palestinian health officials say over 460 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by Israeli forces since the war erupted in October.

The Israeli human rights



A Palestinian wounded in a settler rampage at the Palestine Medical Complex in the West Bank city of Ramallah, Friday, April 12, 2024.

group Yesh Din said that settlers stormed into the village of al-Mughayyir late Friday, searching for the Israeli boy. The group said that settlers were shooting and setting houses on fire in the village.

Videos posted to X by the rights group showed dark clouds of smoke billowing from burning cars as

gunshots rang out. A photo posted by the group showed what appeared to be a crowd of masked settlers.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said that one man was brought dead to a hospital and 25 were treated for wounds. The Palestine Red Crescent Society said eight of the injured were hit by

live fire from settlers.

The deceased man was later identified by his family as 26-year-old Jihad Abu Alia. His father, Afif Abu Alia, said he was shot dead but was unsure whether the fatal bullet was fire by an armed settler or an Israeli soldier.

"My son went with others to defend our land and

honor, and this is what happened," Afif Abu Alia said from a hospital in the West Bank city of Ramallah, where his son's corpse had been transported.

The attack was condemned by Mohamed Mustafa, the new Palestinian prime minister.

The Israeli army said it was searching for the 14-year-old boy, and that forces had opened fire when stones were hurled at soldiers by Palestinians. It said soldiers also cleared out Israeli settlers from the village.

"As of this moment, the violent riots have been dispersed and there are no Israeli civilians present within the town," it said.

U.S. officials, including President Joe Biden, have repeatedly raised concerns about a surge in settler violence against Palestinians in the West Bank since Israel's war with the militant Hamas group in the Gaza Strip began. Rights groups have long accused the military of failing to halt settler violence or punish soldiers for wrongdoing. □

Associated Press

EU, Britain and Spain say significant progress made in talks on post-Brexit status of Gibraltar

By CIARÁN GILES and JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — British and Spanish foreign ministers said a new round of talks held Friday over the status of the disputed territory of Gibraltar following Britain's exit from the European Union were productive and significant progress was made.

The meeting was between Spain's José Manuel Albares, Britain's David Cameron and European Commission Vice-President Maros Sefcovic in Brussels. Gibraltar Chief Minister Fabian Picardo also attended. It was the first time representatives from the four areas had come together

for talks on the issue.

In a statement after the meeting, the parties said "discussions took place in a constructive atmosphere, with significant progress achieved. "General political lines have been agreed (on), including on airport, goods and mobility. Negotiations will continue over the coming weeks to conclude the EU-UK Agreement," it added.

All sides are eager to clinch a deal before European elections in June.

Britain left the European Union in 2020 with the relationship between Gibraltar and the bloc unresolved. Talks on a deal to ensure people and goods can keep flowing over the Gi-

braltar-Spain border have made halting progress in the 19 rounds of negotiations so far, but both Spanish and U.K. officials have recently expressed optimism about a deal.

In Britain's 2016 Brexit referendum, 96% of voters in Gibraltar supported remaining in the EU. The tiny territory on Spain's southern tip depends greatly on access to the EU market for its 34,000 inhabitants.

Gibraltar was ceded to Britain in 1713, but Spain has maintained its sovereignty claim ever since. Relations concerning the Rock, as it is popularly referred to in English, have had their ups and downs over the centuries.



People walk past a Brexit information office at the British territory of Gibraltar, on Jan. 31, 2020.

Associated Press

A major sticking point has been who controls Gibraltar's airport, which under the proposed free-movement deal would be an external border of the EU.

The U.K. and Gibraltar have resisted Spain's insistence that Spanish border officials be based at the airport, which is also home to a Royal Air Force base. □

Argentine court blames Iran and Hezbollah for deadly 1994 Jewish center bombing

By DÉBORA REY and ISABEL DEBRE

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina

(AP) — Argentina's highest criminal court reported a new development Thursday in the elusive quest for justice in the deadliest attack in the country's history the 1994 bombing of a Jewish community center headquarters concluding Iran had planned the attack and Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group had executed the plans.

In a ruling obtained by The Associated Press, Argentina's Court of Cassation deemed Iran and its Lebanese proxy, Hezbollah, responsible for the bombing in Buenos Aires that leveled the community center, killing 85 people, wounding 300 and devastating Latin America's biggest Jewish community.

The court said the attack came in retaliation for Argentina reneging on a nuclear cooperation deal with Tehran.

Alleging Iran's "political and strategic" role in the bombing, the Argentine court paved the way for victims' families to bring



An Argentine and Israeli flag stand side by side at the office of Guillermo Borger, president of the Jewish community center AMIA, during an interview with The Associated Press in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Feb. 8, 2013.

Associated Press

lawsuits against the Islamic Republic. In the past three decades, Iran has not turned over citizens convicted in Argentina. Interpol arrest warrants have led nowhere.

"The significance of these grave human rights violations for the international community as a whole invokes a state's duty to pro-

vide judicial protection," the ruling said, declaring the bombing of the Argentine Jewish Mutual Aid Association community center a "crime against humanity."

The court decision came as no shock. Argentina's judiciary has long maintained Iran was behind the attack, chilling relations be-

tween the countries particularly after the collapse of a joint investigation. Iran has denied involvement. A spokesperson for Hezbollah, Israel's archenemy on its northern border, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

What some said they found shocking, rather, was the court's failure to provide

concrete evidence of Iran's direct involvement or shed new light on the case after 30 years of setbacks and scandals.

"I would never rule Iran out, it's certainly on the list of suspects, but let's do something specific to rule it in," said Joe Goldman, who co-authored a book about the winding investigations into the Jewish community center attack as well as bombing of the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires that killed more than 20 people in 1992. "That would be a serious investigation that we haven't seen."

The court singled out top Iranian officials and paramilitary Revolutionary Guard commanders in its determination that Iran carried out the bombings in response to Argentina scrapping three contracts that would have provided Tehran with nuclear technology in the mid-1980s. Its conclusions were based on confidential intelligence reports.

In light of the court ruling, Israel asked Argentina to declare the Revolutionary Guard a terrorist organization. □

At least a dozen killed and an estimated 15,000 displaced by flooding in Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — Heavy rains pounding dif-

ferent parts of Kenya have led to the deaths of at least



Passengers of a bus that was swept away by floodwaters are rescued by boat, near Garissa, northern Kenya, Tuesday, April 9, 2024.

Associated Press

13 people and displaced some 15,000 people, the United Nations said, as forecasters warn that more rains can be expected until June.

The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, citing the Kenya Red Cross Society, said Thursday that nearly 20,000 people were affected, including an estimated 15,000 people displaced by heavy rains and flash floods across the country since the start of the wet season in mid-March.

The East African country has seen thousands of people killed by flooding in previous rainy seasons, mostly in the lake regions and

downstream of major rivers. The Kenya Red Cross Society told The Associated Press that five major roads were cut off by floods, including Garissa Road in northern Kenya where a bus carrying 51 passengers was swept away on Tuesday. All passengers were rescued.

Kenya's disaster management agency issued a flood warning to residents of Lamu, Tana River and Garissa counties that are downstream of Tana River after flooding breached dams upstream. Residents have been urged to move to higher grounds.

So far, nine out of 47 counties in the country have re-

ported flooding incidents. Mudslides have been reported in the central regions. On Tuesday four people were killed in Narok county, in the western part of the country.

The Kenya Red Cross Society's secretary general, Ahmed Idris, told Citizen TV that "lifesaving assistance" including shelter and clean drinking water was being offered to those displaced and are living in camps to avert outbreaks of waterborne diseases.

The rainy season is expected to reach its peak towards the end of April and subside in June, according to the meteorology department. □

The Internet Archive now houses the Aruba Collection!

(Oranjestad)—This week marks an important development in the preservation of the Aruban history and a step forward into modernizing the island. For the first time ever, the entire history of Aruba is now backed up on the Internet Archive.

In collaboration with the National Library of Aruba (BNA), the non-profit organization was able to digitize various types of documents pertaining to the history of Aruba, including those from the national library itself, along with the National Archives (ANA), the archeological museum of Aruba (MANA) and the University of Aruba (UA), among others.

The project started back in



2018, when Stacy Argondizzo—a long-time visitor—began to find interest in the preservation of the island's history. Although Aruba lies outside of the hurricane belt, we are still vulnerable for natural disaster, which is very likely to end in a destruction of our preserved

physical historical documents. It is for this reason that Argondizzo reached out to Peter Scholing, an information specialist at the national library. Together, using Aruba's own scanning equipment along with the software technology provided by the Internet

Archives to organize the collection, they created a huge online deposit of our island's most precious history.

The collection holds 101,376 items so far. To compare this with the population of Aruba, it would amount to

one collection item for every citizen of Aruba. This includes 40,000 documents, 60,000 images and seven 3D objects.

The Aruban history is something that we cherish and love to promote, both to the younger generation and our lovely visitors. It's for this reason that the digitization and preservation of our documents act as not only a precautionary move, but also one that further promotes—and in some ways—modernizes our history.

You can access digital documents of Aruban history through the website of the national library of Aruba, <https://www.bibliote-canacional.aw/pages/>. □

Visit the historic museum at Fort Zoutman!

(Oranjestad)—Located in the middle of downtown Oranjestad, situated right next to the government building “Cocolishi”, is one of the oldest buildings of Aruba: Fort Zoutman. First constructed in 1796, this site has been used (or left unused) in many ways and have survived eras of war and attempted dismantling.

When anyone refers to Fort Zoutman, they are actually referring to two separate buildings that, over the years, have been merged: the fort and the tower. That's right, the iconic 5-story, squared tower was not part of the

original structure of the fort, and is actually called “Willem III Toren”. Constructed in 1867, this tower was named after the then-reigning king of The Netherlands, Willem III. Willem III Toren was originally a light tower, but after a request from Lieutenant Governor Jan Helenus in 1866, it also became a bell tower.

The fort itself was originally constructed to protect the commerce bay of Paardenbaai from pirates and other disreputable characters roaming the Caribbean Sea. Unlike the Willem III Toren, Fort Zoutman had a more tumultuous past, including



the on-and-off reception of

unwanted members of the English military several times (The Netherlands was at constant war with England back in the colonial era).

Over the years, both the fort and the tower had functioned as different government center points, including a tax and stamps office. For some time these two buildings also housed a police precinct and jail, and even experienced abandonment until the Cultural Center Aruba Foundation (CCA) petitioned for its renovation in 1964, turning the site into the Historic Museum it currently is.

Despite its small size, The Historic Museum guards a rich depository of the commercial, military and social history of Oranjestad, offering a glance into how the social culture of the town came to be. If you are interested in history and want to learn more about Aruba, then Fort Zoutman should definitely be included into your itinerary.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9am-6pm, and Saturday from 10am-2pm. □

Source: The Old Fort of Aruba
by Jan Hartog.



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The Hilton makes a much-needed donation to FPNC



Palm Beach—The Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort & Casino introduced the festive season's Tree of Giving in 2020, as a means of giving back to the community. Guests could contribute to the Tree of Giving, situated in the lobby of the Aruba tower, by purchasing a poinsettia plant throughout the month of December. All proceeds collected went directly to assist the island's food bank FPNC, Fundacion Pa Nos Comunidad, www.fpnucaruba.com.

Continuing the meaningful tradition for its fourth year in a row, Hilton Aruba spread the cheer in December, and presented the amount raised to Gianaika v/d Biezen, director FPNC, just recently. The resort matched guests' contributions on multiple occasions, significantly increasing the total amount collected. Fundacion Pa Nos Comunidad was established in 2009, following Gandhi's view that poverty is the worst form of violence. The foundation runs

a food bank, a clothing bank, and a furniture bank, and has been active ever since. The foundation supports 300 to 350 families each month with a food parcel containing non-perishable tinned and dried foods. It runs a birthday program for kids, awarding them with sweets to share and a gift, on their birthday. FPNC packs extra food baskets at Christmas. The foundation is planning to host a meal packing event in May, in which 100.000 means

will be prepared and packaged, to last several months. Baki den Bario & Aruba Doet, are two more programs on FPNC's agenda, one to collect second-hand clothing, the other to distribute meals to the needy. Headquartered in Modanza, in the heart of the island, FPNC is calling for volunteers to help and for corporate sponsors to come forward. The foundation experienced a significant reduction in donations along with higher priced goods as

a result of inflation. The donation from Hilton arrives at a timely moment, supporting the foundation in its ongoing dedication to local families. Hilton takes pride in once again contributing to this esteemed foundation. Pictured here resort management team, team members and FPNC representatives, for the donation presentation. For more information about how you can assist Fundacion pa nos Comunidad visit their website www.fpnc.aw

Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also

face a fine that they have to pay before leaving. This is surely not a pleasant experience for the tourist. This also leads to a negative reaction which can put our tourism in a negative light. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours!



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Got plans for this weekend? Try visiting the farmer's market!



(Oranjestad)—If you're looking for some fresh and local produce, visit the farmer's market at STR FARM Aruba this Saturday for a nice selection of fruits, veggies, local honey, and other fresh and locally produced goods!

STR FARM Aruba (Alto Vista 18F) is hosting another market event, offering a wide range of fruits and veggies, as well as honey, eggs, herbs and local craft! You may even find homemade kimchi and local coffee! STR Farm is open from 8am to 12pm every Saturday.

Agriculture is a huge part of the Aruban identity, as the island has a rich history of being built by local farmers and cattlemen back in the old days. This is why this local farmer's market are essential in maintaining the tradition of the "cunukero*" and to further promote the beauty and love that goes into farming and cultivation of home-grown food. □

* "Farmer" in Papiamentu.

Photo credit to STR Farm on Facebook.



Craving a late-night snack? We got you covered!

(Oranjestad)—After a night out it's custom to grab yourself a late-night snack on the road. Here in Aruba, there are dozens of food trucks that you can visit to enjoy a late-night bite. Here are a few that can be found in the down town/hotel area.

Chalo burger

Chalo burger is a favorite among locals, and it's due to its popularity that it has branched out to different parts on the island. One of its main locations is in Palm Beach, near the hotel area. Chalo offers a variety of fast-food meals, like hamburgers, hotdogs, loaded fries and more! A popular dish among locals is the Salchipapa: loaded fries with sausages, cheese and a mix of sweet and savory sauce. Perfect for those late-night cravings!

Chalo is open Wednesdays through Mondays from 7pm to 12 am (Fridays till 1am), and is located at Palm Beach 178 (a little past the roundabout near the Piazza Gianni's). Other Locations include Tanki Leendert and Savaneta.

Julio's Corner

Situated in a nice little corner off the highway, Julio's Corner has a huge menu comprised of different dishes and snacks, all made with a Venezuelan twist! From arepa's to chicken wings, to pizzas and burgers, Julio's Corner has it all to satisfy your taste! Editor's choice for what to get at Julio's Corner is the quesadilla, which comes with a side of fries.

Julio's Corner is open Mondays through Saturday from 6pm to 2am (Fridays and Saturdays up to 4am), and is located in the parking lot of the Eagle Bowling Palace, right on the other side of the road from the Sasaki gas station.

Habibi Express



Habibi Express is a Lebanese food truck stand, one of very few food trucks on the island to sell Mediterranean food. Located right at the entrance of The Local Market near the cruise ship port, here you can fill your stomach (and heart) with a variety of options like shawarmas, doners, kapsalons and more, all 100% halal. When asked, the chef there recommends all foodies to try their lamb shawarma, as it's a favorite among guests.

Habibi Express is open every day from 5pm to 12am. While you're there, how about a picture with the genie? □

Students from The University Of Utrecht conduct a study on rainwater harvesting for Aruba

On April 8th, a group of students from the University of Utrecht, namely Ilse Coelman, Sara Ståhlberg, Martha Ramos Monzón, Yoshi Montoya Rodriguez, Gemma Negrini, and Yanina Diaz-Maroto Knöfler, presented the results of their preliminary study conducted in collaboration with Santa Rosa and the University of Aruba.

The presentation was attended by Minister Mr. Ursell Arends as well as a significant number of guests from various private and governmental sectors. The theme centered on the possibility of rainwater harvesting in Aruba and the potential it holds for the island's Agricultural sector as a commercial endeavor. This study was part of the Erasmus exchange program stationed at the University of Aruba.

The Department of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (Santa Rosa) acted as their client, with Mrs. Nathalie Maduro, Director of DLVV-Santa Rosa, coordinating the project alongside Mr. Eric Mijts from the University of Aruba. Mr. Facundo Franken, responsible for the local plant section, oversaw the supply of past reports that served as comparative information to the current situation. He also coordinated visits to various plantation localities and farms. The objective of these visits was to illustrate



the practice of rainwater collection via dams, gutters, rain barrels, plastic tanks with a capacity of over 3000L, or 1000L white tanks.

The students collected data and analyzed the different results from two perspectives: evaluating opportunities for the Agricultural Sector and facilitating the use of water for other purposes within the community. They divided their study and evaluation work into two groups of three. One group focused

on the implementation of rainwater collection, while the other concentrated on community readiness to collect, reuse, and contribute to the sustainability of homes or businesses. As part of their study, they reviewed literature on rainwater collection in Aruba and conducted structured interviews with various stakeholders and a public survey. They recorded and evaluated the suggestions and practices provided by the community regarding rainwater collection.

From the collected data, they selected the most accessible options and concluded that using aluminum gutters connected to 1000L plastic tanks would be the most cost-effective method for individuals interested in rainwater collection at their homes. On the other hand, they suggested that agroforestry might be the most beneficial practice for rainwater collection, directly into the soil, enhancing its fertility and moisture retention. Agroforestry combines agriculture and forestry, where trees of various products are cultivated alongside the main crop for additional benefits.

Many farmers prefer to use all water and light resources solely for cultivation. However, the soil's fertility and its ability to retain moisture may decrease over time without diversifying crops, affecting future cycles. Kravchenko et al. in 2019 demonstrated that root diversity creates a diversity of soil pores that stabilize carbon levels and increase soil moisture. This method of rainwater collection offers water directly to crops but may not be avail-

able for other uses.

The students' conclusion highlighted that, unlike other Caribbean islands, Aruba relies less on rainwater harvesting due to its access to desalinated water from the Water and Energy Company NV (WEB). Historically, the island has invested in natural water sources, intensifying their use through deeper wells and more extensive cisterns. In 1933, a seawater distillation company was established in Balashi. The students noted that in the past, many farmers found stable employment in the island's two refineries, shifting the focus away from agriculture for survival.

One of the recommendations made by the students was to improve communication within the community regarding responsible and practical rainwater harvesting. During the Q&A session, an audience member asked for examples of effective rainwater collection, to which the students referred to the Santa Cruz Craft School, where interconnected tanks of various sizes were used for collection. □



Did you know about...?

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is proud to officially introduce a new segment called Did you know about...?, where we dive into some (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this first edition, we look back at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamentu we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is placa. Cents are called cen (pronounced: seng), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called Dos placa; 10-cent coins were called debchi; 25-cent coins were called diez placa and the 50-cent coin was once called Yotin (pronounced: jo-teen). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called placa too. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban



artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that were the first to set foot on the island.

Current design and symbolism 10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a Turtuga blanco (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, a coral motif, and the symbols of Cas Floria (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called Shoshoro. The birds Trupiaal, Shoco, rock drawings, and the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also

a Purun di ceramica (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the Cododo (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), Cangreu di tera (land crab), Willem III Tower, and again the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called Banana di rif. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the Yuwana (Iguana), Aloe, Toteki (lizard), the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the Baile di cinta (folkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the Dornasol and the Warawara—both local birds, along with the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, the Tuna cactus plant, and the Caha di orgel (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

the word “florin” supposedly is named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word “florino”, both explanations related to historical Italian currencies.□

Source: Placa, placa, placa by the National Library of Aruba



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 42 Borders

1 Warren 43 Await

Beatty film 44 Glade

5 Concert grazer

group

9 Stopwatch

button

10 African

lilies

12 Bone:

Prefix

13 Tadpole,

e.g.

14 Chinese

food

veggies

16 Quirk

17 Chow

down

18 Showy

bird

20 Winter

showers

22 Bills in tills

23 Subject

25 River of

Italy

28 Sights

32 Bar

snacks

34 History

stretch

35 Do

something

36 Seaman's

jacket

38 Way to go

40 Poem part

41 City of

Italy



Yesterday's answer

11 Fires 27 Science

15 Regard- study

less of 29 One

19 Comic of the

Imogene Beatles

21 School 30 Correcting

near aid

Windsor 31 Appeases

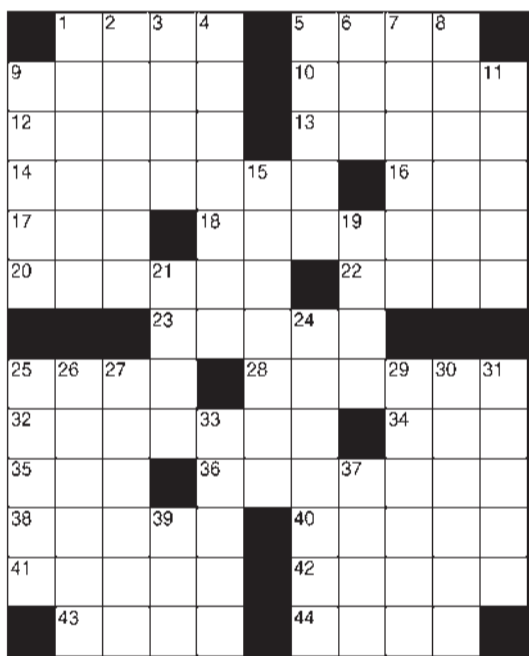
24 Cry after 33 Tip over

a rescue 37 Hand

25 Isolated over

26 Get 39 Light

back metal



4-13

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-13

CRYPTOQUOTE

PEJ QD LCU RATU XFKDBD, MAU

XKBD. PEJ QD LCU RATU

ESWD, MAU ESU. — EPELYE

XCFPEL, "WJPL ICF UWD

WAFUKLX"

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HE WHO KNOWS DOES NOT SPEAK. HE WHO SPEAKS DOES NOT KNOW. — LAO TZU

Cruise ship Schedule: Apr 8 - Apr 14 2024

TUE	09	SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	I	1
WED	10	CARNIVAL MAGIC	07.00	15.00	B	1
		NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	20.00	C	1
		MARELLA VOYAGER	08.00	20.00	I	1
THU	11	MSC DIVINA	07.00	14.00	B	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	18.00	C	1
FRI	12	CARNIVAL PRIDE	09.00	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	10.00	20.00	I	1
SAT	13	NORWEGIAN JADE	07.00	20.00	C	1
TUE	16	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
WED	17	ODYSSEY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
SAT	20	NORWEGIAN PRIMA	10.00	19.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours
Supermarket hours may



vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7

Big banks warn of uncertain year ahead after mixed financial performances in the first quarter

By KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Big banks warned of an “uncertain” year ahead after mixed financial results during the first quarter in an environment of stubbornly high inflation and geopolitical clashes in Europe, the Middle East and elsewhere.

JPMorgan reported a modest 6% rise in profits Friday while profits at Wells Fargo and Citigroup declined, though both topped Wall Street expectations.

“Many economic indicators continue to be favorable. However, looking ahead, we remain alert to a number of significant uncertain forces,” JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon said, citing the wars in Gaza and Ukraine as well as other geopolitical pressures, high levels of government spending across the world and “persistent inflationary pressures.”

Dimon used language Friday that was similar to what he told investors in his annual shareholder letter earlier this week. In that letter, Dimon warned that geopolitical events including the war in Ukraine and the Israel-Hamas war, as well as U.S. political polarization, could be creating an environment that “may very well be creating risks that could eclipse anything since World War II.”

Dimon’s shareholder letter on Monday seemed prophetic two days later when the U.S. released hotter-than-expected inflation data for March, putting uncomfortably high consumer prices back at the top of agenda for policymakers, particularly President Joe Biden in his bid for a second term in the White House.

In call with reporters, Citigroup executives echoed Dimon’s comments. Mark Mason, Citi’s chief financial officer, said that while the bank still sees an economic soft landing where inflation cools while keeping the economy growing risks to the economy abound.



Pedestrians approach JPMorgan Chase headquarters on Dec. 29, 2023, in New York. JP Morgan reports earnings on Friday, April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

“The global economy seems to be resilient,” Mason said, but that the bank remains concerned about inflation and what will happen as interest rates remain elevated for a longer period of time.

JPMorgan, the nation’s largest bank, earned a profit of \$13.42 billion, or \$4.44 a share, compared with a profit of \$12.62 billion, or \$4.10 a share, in the same period a year earlier. JPMorgan’s results were pulled lower by a \$725 million one-time charge for an assessment by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

While it topped analyst expectations, shares of JPMorgan fell more than 5% Friday after the bank released conservative full-

year projections for net interest income. That forecast largely reflects the bank’s expectation that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates later this year. Most metrics of JPMorgan’s business were solid for the quarter. While investment banking revenues were largely flat, the bank reported an uptick in activity. In its consumer bank, profits rose 6% and the bank set aside less money to cover potentially bad loans.

Wells Fargo issued its first earnings report since the Biden administration eased some of the restrictions on the bank after a series of scandals.

Wells earned \$4.6 billion in the first quarter, or \$1.20 per share, beating analyst estimates of \$1.06 per

share. However, the profit was less than the \$5 billion, or \$1.23 per share, that Wells earned in the same period a year ago.

The San Francisco bank said average loans fell from last year’s first quarter but that drop-off was expected because of elevated interest rates.

In February, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, one of the regulators of big national banks like Wells Fargo, terminated a consent order that had been in place since September 2016. The order which came after Wells’ employees were found to have opened millions of accounts illegally in order to meet unrealistic sales goals required the bank to overhaul how it sold financial products to customers and provide additional consumer protections, as well as employee protections for whistleblowers. □



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Should you watch 'Sasquatch Sunset' about a family of Bigfoots? Not yet

By MARK KENNEDY

AP Entertainment Writer

Do you reckon Sasquatches snore? C'mon, you know the answer, deep down. Of course, they do. They snore and eat noisily and pick bugs out of each other's fur and then eat those bugs, noisily.

What else do Sasquatches do, you wonder? One of the wildest movies of the year or the century, for that matter suggests they mourn, cuddle, bury their dead, enjoy throwing rocks in rivers, make art and wonder if they're alone in the world.

Even so, "Sasquatch Sunset" from filmmaking brothers David and Nathan Zellner, is a bewildering 90-minute, narrator-less and wordless experiment that's as audacious as it is infuriating. It's not clear if everyone was high making it or we should be while watching it.

Nathan Zellner, Jesse Eisenberg, Riley Keough and Christophe Zajac-Denek play a makeshift family of four Sasquatches, lost in hair suits and prosthetics and communicating only in grunts, snorts and



This image released by Bleecker Street shows Jesse Eisenberg and Christophe Zajac-Denek in a scene from the film "Sasquatch Sunset."

Associated Press

howls. They also pee a lot. Why the filmmakers hired such starry actors instead of paying scale to some unknowns is puzzling. None of the Sasquatches do more than what could be called Method Chimpanzee jumping up and down, whooping and growling. A group of real chimps would ding the quartet for over-acting.

As an exercise in creating empathy for monsters, "Sasquatch Sunset" does an admirable job. In the first frames, when we see a loping Bigfoot in the middle distance and then three more it's clear that they

are telling this story, not the folks who usually capture them in shaky camera frames.

There are plenty of Sasquatches-are-just-like-us moments, like when one brings flowers to seduce another or two Bigfoots comfort each other after a death. Perhaps the most poignant moments are when they pound trees with sticks in unison, a rhythmic question that echoes through the valley. It's a call, waiting for a response anyone out there like us?

But then there's a lot of gross-out stuff. We've mentioned the peeing, but it

turns out that Sasquatches sneeze, procreate loudly and like to touch their genitals and then smell their fingers. They can also poo on demand and throw that poo to scare off predators. One juvenile Bigfoot makes his hand into a makeshift puppet and talks to it like a nod to the kid in "The Shining" and another considers inserting his manhood into a small tree hole, like a prehistoric riff off that famous scene in "American Pie." Both things can be true, of course: Bigfoot can be disgusting and deep at the same time. But it's not always clear what the film-

makers are going for here satire, metaphor, sympathy, naturalism or gross-out comedy?

The Sasquatches reveal deeply human characteristics and may be stand-ins for our innocent pasts, a lost link in our evolution, showing the unrelenting violence of natural life or just the voiceless among us now. Or the filmmakers might just like the image of tossing poo.

Gorgeous vistas of pristine forests and misty valleys don't help us figuring out when this all takes place but gradual clues emerge, including evidence of logging and a truly surreal bit at a human camping site, scored by the Erasure song "Love to Hate You." But if the Zellners had an environmental lesson here, they shanked it.

There's great music from The Octopus Project, veering from bright electric guitar noodles to sci-fi electronic dread reminiscent of "2001: A Space Odyssey." Stick through the roll of end credits and see one of the best credits ever in film: Sasquatch Wrangler. You don't see that every

CBS says its daytime show 'The Talk' will end its run in December after 15 seasons

By ALICIA RANCILIO

Associated Press

"The Talk" is ending its long-running daytime conversation.

The CBS talk show will end in December after 15 seasons, the network announced Friday.

"The Talk" was created by actor Sara Gilbert with the idea of a group of female hosts speaking about hot topics and current events, much like ABC's "The View." Gilbert said in a 2011 interview with The Associated Press that it was based on her actual group of "mom friends" who would gather to chat. She liked the idea of "a motley crew you would never really put together, but then sudden-

ly there's all this commonality."

The show debuted in 2010 with hosts Gilbert, Sharon

Osbourne, Julie Chen, Leah Remini and Holly Robinson Peete. Marissa Jaret Winokur was enlisted as a ro-



From left: Hosts of the CBS talk show "The Talk" Akbar Gbajabiamila, Amanda Kloots, Sheryl Underwood, Jerry O'Connell and Natalie Morales pose for a photo for the season 14 premiere which aired Feb. 23, 2023. The talk show is ending after its 15th season in December, CBS confirmed Friday, April 12, 2024.

Associated Press

ing reporter who would be in the field. A hosting shake-up occurred after the first season. Winokur's position was axed, and Peete and Robinson were replaced by Sheryl Underwood and Aisha Tyler.

"The Talk" would go on to have a number of hosting changes over its run. In 2018, Chen left the show after her husband, then-CBS Corp. boss Les Moonves was fired due to sexual misconduct allegations. Gilbert left her on camera post in 2019 but remains an executive producer. Osbourne's departure in 2021 made headlines following a heated on-air discussion about racism between Osbourne and Underwood.

Underwood is the only person from the early days of "The Talk" who remains on the show today. She sits alongside Natalie Morales, Amanda Kloots, Jerry O'Connell and Akbar Gbajabiamila.

In a joint statement released by CBS, Amy Reisenbach, president of CBS Entertainment and David Stapf who is president of CBS Studios said: "It goes without saying that hosting and producing a year-round talk show is no easy task." They went on to express "sincere gratitude" to the hosts, producers and crew and recognized "former show hosts and colleagues who contributed throughout the seasons."

Caitlin Clark and Angel Reese headline one of the most anticipated WNBA drafts in years

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Caitlin Clark, Angel Reese, Cameron Brink and others make this one of the most anticipated WNBA drafts in recent years. There are several impact players up for grabs, but their talent is nearly eclipsed by their popularity among basketball fans.

"Caitlin is kind of in a world of her own, but I don't know that we have seen this kind of excitement across the board," ESPN analyst Rebecca Lobo said. "You know, Angel Reese has a massive following. Cameron Brink has a large following of people, whether it's following them on social media or following them throughout the course of their college career."

"We have women coming into the draft this year, who people are very much aware of and eager to see how their game is going to translate at this level."

Clark has helped bring millions of new fans to the game with her signature logo shots and dazzling passing ability. The Iowa star was a big reason why a record 18.9 million viewers tuned in to the NCAA



Iowa guard Caitlin Clark, center, sits with coach Lisa Bluder, left, and guard Kate Martin, right, as she finds out her number will be retired, during an Iowa women's basketball team celebration Wednesday, April 10, 2024, in Iowa City, Iowa.

championship game where South Carolina beat the Hawkeyes.

The NCAA Division I all-time scoring leader will go first to the Indiana Fever on Monday night when the draft takes place at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in front of 1,000 fans.

"This is the first time we're going to have fans at the draft, so I think that's going to be special," ESPN analyst Andraya Carter said.

"For people watching at home to see and hear a crowd and fans and people there, I think it'll be really exciting."

While Clark is a lock to go first, Brink, Tennessee's Riquea Jackson and South Carolina's Kamilla Cardoso have all been in the discussion to be taken at No. 2 by Los Angeles. The Sparks also own the No. 4 pick with Chicago choosing third.

"They are foundational.

They're an incredible opportunity for our organization," Sparks GM Raegan Pebley said. "We definitely want to see two players that not only have the skill set to make an impact early, but also a long runway ahead of them, opportunities to develop, opportunities to, not only be excellent in what they do, but how they impact the other pieces around them as we continue to build this

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team."

Dallas is fifth and Washington sixth.

Minnesota, Chicago, Dallas, Connecticut, New York and Atlanta close out the first round. In all, there are three rounds and 36 picks in total.

Here are a few other tidbits for the draft:

INJURY SETBACKS

All-Americans Mackenzie Holmes of Indiana and Elizabeth Kitley of Virginia Tech won't be able to play in the WNBA this season because of knee injuries.

Holmes said on social media that she is having surgery next month.

"At this time to ensure my body is healthy and my playing career is as long and successful as possible, I have decided to get the necessary surgery in May to prevent further issues and alleviate the pain it has caused," she said. "I have declared for the 2024 WNBA draft and pray that a team honors me with a selection knowing I will be ready for the start of 2025 training camp."

Kitley tore the ACL in her left knee in Virginia Tech's final regular season game and missed the entire postseason. □

Naomi Osaka, Iga Swiatek and Emma Raducanu pick up victories in the Billie Jean King Cup

LONDON (AP) — Grand Slam title winners Naomi Osaka, Iga Swiatek and Emma Raducanu all earned victories for their countries in Billie Jean King Cup qualifying Friday.

Osaka hit 15 aces and put Japan a step away from reaching the BJK Cup Finals with a 6-2, 7-6 (5) win over Kazakhstan's Yulia Putintseva. It was the four-time Grand Slam champion's first match in the team competition since February 2020. Osaka, back on tour after becoming a mother last July, saved all three break points she faced and compiled a 31-16 edge in winners. Her win on an in-

door hard court in Tokyo followed Nao Hibino's 6-1, 6-0 victory over Anna Danilina and gave Japan a 2-0 lead in the best-of-five-match qualifying round.

Two other singles matches and one in doubles are scheduled for Saturday.

A total of 16 nations are involved in qualifiers Friday and Saturday, with the winners advancing to the 12-team Billie Jean King Cup Finals in Seville, Spain, in November. Those eight teams will join defending champion Canada, 2023 runner-up Italy, host Spain and wild-card selection Czech Republic in the Finals field. In other action Friday, No.

1-ranked Swiatek and Poland went ahead 2-0 at Switzerland, 2021 U.S. Open champion Raducanu helped Britain finish Day 1 tied 1-1 at France, host Australia took a 2-0 lead over Mexico, and Slovakia was up 2-0 against visiting Slovenia.

The other matchups are: Belgium at the United States in Orlando; Ukraine against Romania at Amelia Island, Florida; and Germany at Brazil.

In Biel, Switzerland, Swiatek who has won three championships at the French Open and one at the U.S. Open broke Simona Waltert five times on an indoor



Poland's Iga Swiatek, right, is congratulated by Switzerland's Simona Waltert after their Billie Jean King Cup qualification round tennis match at the Jan Group Arena in Biel, Switzerland, Friday, April 12, 2024.

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hard court to win 6-3, 6-1, before Magdalena Frech

came back to beat Celine Naef 6-7 (8), 7-5, 6-3. □

Yankees-Guardians series opener postponed by rain. Day-night doubleheader scheduled for Saturday

By **TOM WITHERS**

AP Sports Writer

CLEVELAND (AP) — A total solar eclipse, stirring comeback, home runs by brothers in the same inning, a rainout and doubleheader. Stephen Vogt's first home-stand as Cleveland's manager has had a little of everything.

And, it's not over.

On Friday, steady rain and a forecast for wet weather along strong winds postponed the Guardians' three-game series opener against the New York Yankees. The teams will now play a split doubleheader Saturday, with the first game starting at 12:10 p.m., and the second game slated for 6:10 p.m.

This is New York's only visit to Cleveland this season, so it was essential for the game to made up right away.

Carlos Carrasco, who was scheduled to start Friday, is expected to pitch Game 1 for the Guardians with Tris-



Cleveland Guardians' Bo Naylor (23) celebrates his game winning RBI single off Chicago White Sox pitcher Bryan Shaw with Josh Naylor in a baseball game, Wednesday, April 10, 2024, in Cleveland. Associated Press

ton McKenzie pitching the second game.

New York will start Clarke Schmidt in Game 1, and Cody Poteet will make his season debut in the second game.

It will be Carrasco's first start in Cleveland since 2020, when he was traded following the season to the New York Mets in the Francisco Lindor deal. The popular 37-year-old

Carrasco signed as a free agent during the offseason and made the Guardians' opening-day roster.

Carrasco has gotten no-decisions in his first two starts, allowing four runs

and seven hits in eight innings.

He'll have his hands full with a Yankees team that is off an MLB-best 10-3 start, including a 6-1 mark on the road.

The Guardians have opened well under Vogt, their engaging 39-year-old manager who replaced Terry Francona. Cleveland is 9-3, the club's best start since 2002 and the Guardians have won all four series.

New York's early success was expected.

Cleveland's was not.

The Guardians went 76-86 last season and have already been beset with injuries to their pitching staff. Shane Bieber, the 2020 Cy Young winner and staff ace, underwent season-ending Tommy John surgery on Friday, and Cleveland is still waiting for Gavin Williams to join the rotation after he hurt his elbow in spring training. □

More history for Tiger Woods. He makes the Masters cut for a record 24th time in a row.

By **PAUL NEWBERRY**

AP National Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — Tiger Woods claimed more history at Augusta National on Friday, making the cut for a record 24th consecutive time.

Of course, his sights were fixated on a far greater goal — a record-tying sixth

green jacket.

Woods broke the cut record he shared with three-time champion Gary Player, who advanced to the weekend 23 straight times beginning in 1959, and 1992 winner Fred Couples, whose own streak lasted until 2007.

"It means I have a chance

going into the weekend," said Woods, whose even-par 72 left him 1 over through 36 holes. "I'm here. I have a chance to win the golf tournament. I don't know if they're all going to finish today, but I'm done. I got my two rounds in. Just need some food and some caffeine, and I'll be good to go."

It was a grueling day for the five-time Masters champion, even more so considering the 48-year-old has endured numerous injuries, countless surgeries and a devastating car wreck that nearly cost him his right leg. Woods was back at the course before sunrise to finish up the final five holes of his opening round, which was cut short by darkness after storms Thursday morning delayed the start of the tournament by 2 1/2 hours. He made a couple of bogeys to complete a 73,

then had less than an hour to rest up for another 18 holes.

With the wind howling again at Augusta National, Woods had to do all sorts of scrambling to compensate for one wayward approach shot after another. But he kept pulling off nifty chips and clutch putts to keep his score safely above the cut line, which was projected at 4 over when he finished his round.

"I was forced to get up-and-down a few times today, and I was able to do that," Woods said. "A lot of those chip shots I was able to get up-and-down because I left it in the perfect spot, and that's understanding how to play this golf course. ... Most of the up-and-downs I was in a perfect spot."

Woods went through a stretch of six straight hole s before the turn where he

made nothing but birdies or bogeys, but he settled things a bit on the back nine with a single bogey at the 14th where his approach from 150 yards sailed into the gallery behind the green and a two-putt birdie at the par-5 15th after clearing the pond with two booming shots.

Woods headed into the weekend likely to face a daunting deficit, with leader Bryson DeChambeau at 7 under with three holes remaining.

But Woods, of course, still thinks he has a chance to equal Jack Nicklaus' record of six green jackets.

"I'm right there," he said. "I don't think anyone is going to run off and hide right now, but it's really bunched. The way the ball is moving on the greens, chip shots are being blown, it's all you want in a golf course." □



Tiger Woods hits his tee shot on the 14th hole during second round at the Masters golf tournament at Augusta National Golf Club Friday, April 12, 2024, in Augusta, Ga.

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